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## Spying On Ourselves

THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION has issued an ill-advised proposed presidential order that could lead to creation of a police state in the United States.

The radical proposal would allow the Central Intelligence Agency to infiltrate and try to influence domestic groups, organizations and institutions. Such infiltration would be authorized solely by the CIA director for what he happens to see as "any lawful purpose."

The proposal is a clear invitation to a return to the abuses of Americans' personal privacy and civil liberties that were all too commonplace during the Nixon administration. It would allow a huge, secretly funded spy agency to snoop on every aspect of Americans' private lives and to infiltrate businesses, churches, newspapers, political groups and other such organizations without being accountable to any outside authority.

The proposal, which is receiving well deserved bipartisan criticism on Capitol Hill, ultimately could create precisely the sort of totalitarian regime at home that the CIA normally works against overseas.

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RECOGNIZING THE dangers inherent in unleashing CIA domestic spies on Americans, those who framed the National Security Act of 1947 pointedly banned CIA spying in the United States. Noting CIA abuses in the early '70s of the civil liberties of many patriotic Americans who were guilty only of disagreeing with a misguided foreign policy, the Carter administration commendably gave new emphasis to the 1947 ban in its 1978 security policy order.

There's no compelling reason to retreat from that order, and there remain many sound reasons to keep it intact. In cases where there are good reasons to suspect that domestic groups really pose a threat to national security, countermeasures can be conducted by the FBI, with the approval of the attorney general.

President Reagan could sign his spy order into law anytime. But the barrage of criticism the proposal has generated in Congress apparently has persuaded the White House to re-evaluate its position. All Americans who value their privacy and personal freedom should hope that the president will drop a dangerous plan to put the CIA in the business of domestic spying on Americans.